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The aim of the Ecumenical Press Service is to keep its readers informed of trends of thought and opinion in and about the Churches and Christian movements. It is therefore not to be held responsible for opinions expressed in its news items.

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NORWAY

Bishop Berggrav Decorated

King Hankon of Norway has presented Bishop Berggrav with the Grand Cross of the Order of Saint Olav, for the work which he has carried out in the spheres of culture and religion.

During the Quisling régime Bishop Berggrav spent three years under detention, because of his attitude towards the spiritual resistance of Norway.

E.P.S. Geneva

NIGERIA

Growing Ecumenical Consciousness

Establishment of a weekly newspaper as a medium for the Christian denominations in Nigeria was approved at the sixth annual Conference of the Nigeria Christian Council, held on September 5, in Lagos.

Need for an interdenominational newspaper not only to make Christian views on current affairs better known, but to promote Christian unity was particularly stressed by the Rt. Rev. J. L. Vining, Bishop of Lagos, in an address to the Conference. "We have talked for many years about Church union. What better link could we have to draw us together than a Church newspaper to which members of every denomination could write?" said the Bishop.

The Conference also voted to create a theological training Institute in Lagos, and to build a mission hospital which would be accessible to patients of all denominations. Speakers expressed their gratitude to the increasing cooperation being shown by Nigerian authorities toward Christian missionary work.

In a message of greeting to the newly-formed Church of South India the Council declared: "Many Christians in Nigeria have watched with prayerful interest the negotiations which, after many years, have reached their successful end in Church Union. Church members in South India have been pioneers in a great venture of faith which will have world-wide repercussions."

E.P.S. Geneva

New Adhesions to the World Council of Churches

Since the meeting of the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches held in Geneva in February 1946, 40 new Churches have decided to take part in the establishment of the World Council, making a total of 125. These 40 Churches are:

Australasia : Methodist Church of Australasia
Brazil : Presbyterian Church of Brazil
Canada : Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends
China : China Baptist Council - North China Congregational Church
Czechoslovakia : Reformed Church in Slovakia
Egypt : Coptic Orthodox Church - Patriarchate of Alexandria
France : Evangelical Church of the Augsburgian Confession in Alsace and Lorraine - Evangelical Lutheran Church of France
Germany : Mennonite Church - Old Catholic Church in Germany
Greece : Church of Greece - Greek Evangelical Church
India : Syrian Orthodox Church of Malabar - United Church of Northern India
Indonesia : Protestant Church in Indonesia
Italy : Evangelical Methodist Church of Italy
Korea : Presbyterian Church of Korea
Netherlands : Free Evangelical Congregations - Evangelical Lutheran Church - Union of Baptists
New Zealand : Associated Churches of Christ in New Zealand - Congregational Union of New Zealand - Methodist Church of New Zealand
Palestine : Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem
Rumania : Protestant Evangelical Church Augsburgian Confession - Transylvanian Reformed Church
Sweden : Swedish Covenant Mission
Spain : Evangelical Church in Spain
Syria : Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch (with membership in Lebanon)
Turkey : Oecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople
United Kingdom and Eire : Presbyterian Church of Wales - Church of Wales - United Free Church of Scotland
United States of America : African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church - American Lutheran Church - Evangelical United Brethren Church - United Evangelical Lutheran Church

Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East.

E.P.S. Geneva

CHINA

Grant to Christian Colleges

The United Board for Christian Colleges in China announced that 13 Christian Colleges have received a grant of about 500,000 American dollars from the Chinese National Government for rehabilitation and support of their plants. The Chinese Vice-Minister of Education, Dr Li-Wu Han, announcing the grant, said: "Christian education has rendered invaluable services to China and has still an important role to play in the training of personnel for the reconstruction of the country."

E.P.S. Geneva

GREAT BRITAIN

The Missionary Aviation Fellowship

It is now two years since Flight-Lieutenant Murray Kendon of Auckland (New Zealand) presented the Mildmay Centre in London with his detailed plan for spreading the Gospel in remote areas by aeroplane. The Mildmay Centre, which coordinates missionary activities throughout the world, eventually adopted Murray's scheme and the Missionary Aviation Fellowship came into being. Among his old comrades in the R.A.F. Murray found plenty of qualified personnel prepared to give their services to his Fellowship, and 50 of them are now ready to run the services as soon as the planes are available.

It was decided to use a small type of aircraft which could not merely take missionaries out, but which could also be used to carry them to and from points of embarcation, to the lonely outposts in the jungles of Central Africa and the hills of China and to the other isolated bases where missionary stations have been established. Only one type of aircraft came up to the required specifications - the Miles Gemini, and owing to the generous donations received, it was possible to order the first Gemini for July 1947. The Fellowship has appointed representatives in New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, and invitations have already been received for the M.A.F. to pay a flying visit to missionary stations in Ethiopia, East Africa, the Belgian Congo, Angola and Northern Rhodesia. E.P.S. Geneva

UNITED STATES

Church Papers Show Big Gain in Circulation

Church publications in the United States have greatly increased their circulation in the past seven years, according to a survey by Religious News Service. The survey, covering 70 representative Protestant and Roman Catholic newspapers and magazines, showed that 57 of the publications enjoyed a gain in circulation ranging from 10 to 1200 per cent. Today their combined circulation runs over 4,225,000.

"Missions", a Baptist publication, reported its 1940 circulation was 4,000; by 1947, it had increased to 53,000. "The Christian Herald", Protestant interdenominational monthly, had a circulation of 252,000 in 1940; it now has a circulation of 380,000. "The Bible Society Record" passed from 40,000 (1940) to 210,000. "The Christian Advocate", a Methodist magazine, advanced from 225,000 to 350,000. "The Federal Council Bulletin" went up from 21,000 to 31,000, "The Gospel Messenger" (Brethren) from 23,047 to 46,247, "The Lutheran Herald" from 38,847 to 78,668, "The Living Church" (Episcopal), from 10,312 to 15,422, "America" (Roman Catholic) from 24,271 to 36,985.

The gain is attributed to the increased public interest in world affairs resulting from the war, to the increase of interest in religion generally and to improved editorial content. E.P.S. Geneva

ITALY

General Assembly of the Baptist Church

The Baptist Church of Italy held its first post-war general Assembly from September 10 to 12. (The last general Assembly was held in 1939). There were 96 delegates present including 31 pastors, 2 missionaries and 63 laymen.

The Assembly sent fraternal greetings to the Italo-American Baptist Association and to the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (U.S.A.). A new Executive Committee was elected with Pastor Enrico Paschetto of Turin as Chairman, and Pastor A.G. Ricci of Naples as Vice-Chairman. Pastor Manfredi Ronchi was appointed Executive Secretary and Pastor F. Foderà Treasurer.

The keynote of the Assembly was: Evangelisation, in obedience to the great commission entrusted by Jesus to His disciples for all time.

E.P.S. Geneva

JAPAN

Conference of Christian Workers

A conference of Christian workers was held recently at Yumoto, presided over by the Rev. Kozaki Michio, Moderator of the Church of Christ in Japan, and Dr Paul S. Mayer, Chairman of the committee of six representing the Foreign Missions Conference of North America. The conference considered the problem of how the Churches of the world can help Japanese Christianity. It issued recommendations stressing that trained personnel are needed in new fields such as work in prisons, farm areas, fishing villages and industrial communities. This personnel should include men and women.

A 25-year plan of the Church of Christ in Japan was outlined for rural evangelism. This plan calls for the establishment of 1000 self-sustaining Churches among 10,000 farm villages; promotion of a central farm evangelism research Institute; publication of a Christian magazine, etc. In the field of social work, the conference approved the following recommendations: trained social workers be requested from America, scholarships be provided for training social workers; a college of social service be created; establishment of a Christian medical university.

Asserting that effective evangelism in Japan calls for full cooperation by all communions, the conference recommended that a "Japan National Christian Council", or a "Council of Cooperation in Japan" be organised. This Council would establish relations with similar bodies in other lands and with the International Missionary Council. The Council was suggested as the agency which would distribute undesignated relief supplies sent to Japan for Church and other Christian organisations. This proposal is supported also by the 8 Protestant Mission Boards working in Japan representing the Congregational-Christian Church, the Disciples, the Evangelical and Reformed Church, the Evangelical United Brethren, the Methodist, the Presbyterian and the Reformed Churches in America and the United Church of Canada. E.P.S. Geneva

New Chairman of the Faith and Order Continuation Committee

The Chairmanship of the World Conference on Faith and Order Continuation Committee has been vacant since the death of Archbishop Temple in 1944. When the Continuation Committee met at Clarens, Switzerland, in August this year, it was proposed that the Rt. Rev. Yngve T. Brilioth, D.D., Bishop of Växsö, Sweden, be appointed. News has now been received that Bishop Brilioth has accepted the position. E.P.S. Geneva

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NEW ZEALAND Conference on Faith and Order

An important event in the history of the Christian Churches in New Zealand has been the gathering early in September of 180 representatives of the eight Churches which comprise the National Christian Council of New Zealand together with representatives of the youth of the Churches, of the theological colleges and of persons interested in the island Churches in the south-west Pacific.

This Conference was first decided upon in 1945 when the Churches met to consider subjects connected with the life and work of the Churches. It was felt then that even more important than a common approach to great national and social questions was the whole subject of the relationship between the Churches themselves in matters of faith and order. Full account was taken of the findings of the great conferences on this subject overseas. Careful preparation was made in order that this might not be merely a discussion between experts in this particular field but might carry with it as far as possible the clergy and people of the congregations throughout the country.

For two years Study Groups of both clergy and laity have been meeting in some 15 different centres throughout New Zealand, working under a co-ordinated plan prepared and supervised by a group at headquarters in Christchurch. These Study Groups dealt with questions concerning the doctrine of Christ, the Church, the Sacraments, and the Ministry. The findings of the Study Groups were laid before a preparatory conference in February 1947 and became the starting point of the main Conference.

Diversified as the Churches represented at the Wellington Conference have been, a marked spirit of unity was prevalent throughout the Conference and a deep longing that the way might be opened for a united Church which should express to the country of New Zealand the Christian motive and challenge.

The Chair was taken by the Very Rev. A.K. Warren, Dean of Christchurch, and the Secretary was the Rev. A.A. Brash, Secretary of the National Christian Council in New Zealand. E.P.S. Geneva

GERMANY Church Constitution Recognised as an Internal Matter of the Church

A few months ago the Interallied Commission passed Law No. 49, rescinding the "National Law concerning the Constitution of the German Evangelical Church" (passed under the Nazi régime on July 14, 1933). In connection with this law the Chancellery of the Evangelical Church in Germany is now publishing a legal statement, part of which reads as follows:

"The significance of Law No. 49 lies primarily in the fact that a departure is made from the 19th-century conceptions of Church and State and from the idea of the totalitarian State, according to which the internal order of the Church was determined by State jurisdiction. The freedom of the Evangelical Church to decide on its own order will be of particular importance for the new orders concerning the provincial Churches and the order of the Evangelical Church in Germany (E.K.D.) which are in course of preparation."

The law passed by the Nazi Government and now rescinded by the Inter-allied Control Commission contains in Article I a recognition by the Government of the constitution of the E.K.D. and of the way in which it was carried out. The cancellation of this recognition does not mean (so the legal statement of the Chancellery states) "that the Constitution of the E.K.D. is no longer recognised by the present state authorities as a valid right. It is expressly stated in Article II of Law No. 49 that the Constitution of the E.K.D. of July 11, 1933 is not affected by this cancellation, and that it is left in the hands of the local German church authorities either partially to maintain or to abolish this Constitution as an internal affair of the Church. This means that the order of the Church derives its legal validity not from recognition by the State, but because it is an order created by the Church itself." E.P.S.Geneva

GERMANY

Organisational Conference of Evangelical Groups Working among Students

On the "Day for German Christian Students" held at Heidelberg at the beginning of August - the first large meeting of the kind since the war - three important Christian organisations, which are working for evangelisation today among the educated classes in Protestant Germany, decided to join forces. These three organisations were:

1) The National Union of Evangelical Student Bodies in Germany (the German Student Christian Movement affiliated to the World's Student Christian Federation)

2) The newly-created Auxiliary Movement of the Student Christian Movement (Movement of Christian Graduates in Germany)

3) The "Friendly Circles" of German Evangelical Graduates who are springing up all over Germany at the moment on the pattern of the ones at Bad Boll and Hermannsburg. They are in permanent close touch with the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, near Geneva, and carry on an entirely new kind of "open discussion" on a wide range of sociological subjects at conferences arranged between the Church and modern laymen from all kinds of professions.

Dr Reinold von Thadden-Trieglaff (at present in Geneva) at a solemn ceremony presided over by Bishop Wurm and Bishop Lilje was proposed as Chairman, assisted by Fräulein Herta Scheifhacken as women's representative. Dr Eberhard Müller of Bad Boll was appointed Vice-President for the West, and Dr Martin Fischer of Berlin for the East, Dr Ewald Katzmann of Tübingen was made Treasurer, and Chaplain Horst Bannach of Hamburg General Secretary. The Committee includes other leading men in the German Evangelical Church such as Bishop Hanns Lilje, Rector Dietzfelbinger, Professor Helmut Thielicke, Professor Sörensen and Dr.med. Jakob Köbberling of the Free Churches.

This union of older and younger missionary efforts in the universities is the happy culmination of a development which began after the war as an attempt to counteract the effects of National-Socialism, and in the beginning went through a time of great tension. After these decisions taken at Heidelberg one may look forward in future to a much closer cooperation between the different missionary activities, a stronger concentration of the forces

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available, and a permanent exchange of ideas concerning experiences both within Germany and in other countries. It is hoped that the other associations for Christian graduates will join later.

At a time of increasing emphasis on confessional differences, the new mission-constitution has undoubtedly greatly strengthened the idea of the common responsibility of all German lay Protestants, in spite of the differences between the Official Provincial Churches and the Free Churches, the Lutheran and the Calvinistic Churches. E.P.S. Geneva

UNITED STATES

Half a Million Youth Attended Summer Church Camps

Half a million young people attended 3,000 church camps and conferences during the past summer in the United States and Canada, according to Dr Roy D. Ross, General Secretary of the International Council of Religious Education. Dr Ross pointed out that denominational camps are only a fairly recent development, dating back to about 1918, yet they have become "a very important phase of the Church's programme for inspiring her outstanding youth with ideals of Christian service and educating them for their tasks. Camps have done more to change the lives of young people who have attended them especially in enlisting them in Christian leadership, than any other single factor of the Church's programme", Dr Ross declared.

Dr Ross said that although Summer Camps have until recently been primarily for youth from about 12 to 25 years, other age groups now have their camps in larger numbers. Children, adult and family groups are multiplying rapidly. He cited new developments such as work camps, caravans, relief projects, students working in industry, government, agriculture and cooperatives and other types of new summer opportunities which Churches are providing for their youth. E.P.S. Geneva

"Oslo Calling"

The Oslo World Conference of Christian Youth has been well reported in many countries, judging by the periodicals which have reached Geneva. Many have devoted an entire number to reports of the Conference in all its aspects. The most ambitious so far has been the popularly written story of the Conference published under the title "Oslo Calling" by the British Council of Churches Youth Department (56 Bloomsbury Street, London W.C.1) from whom copies may be ordered at 2 shillings.

The Rev. Francis House who acted as Secretary of the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches in the first year of its history and also as Secretary for the Oslo Conference has now left Geneva to take up his work as Director of the Religious Department of the British Broadcasting Corporation. E.P.S. Geneva

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